

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

In the specification, paragraph [0001] has been amended.

This amendment adds, changes and/or deletes claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 1-20 remain pending in this application.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the disclosure because of missing information in the Cross Reference to Related Applications. Applicants have amended the Specification to include the missing information. No new matter is added.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to the drawings. Applicants have provided Formal Drawings. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection of the drawings is respectfully requested.

On pages 2-3 of the Office Action, Claims 1 and 6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,747,803 ("Doong"). The Examiner states:

Regarding claim 1, Doong disclosed in Fig. 1 a method of inspecting a surface associated with manufacture of an integrated circuit (10), the method comprising . . . electron beam (e-) to the surface; transforming at least a portion of the surface (12); and inspecting the surface using a scanning electron microscope . . .

Regarding claim 6, Doong discloses the inspecting step including at least one of preventing volatile species leaving the surface and substantially dissipating a charge built up in the surface

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. Doong is referred to below as the cited art.

To advance prosecution, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the limitation of dependent Claim 2. On page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner has objected to Claim 2 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Claim 1 now includes the limitation of original Claim 2. Accordingly, Claim 1 and its dependent claims 2-6 are patentable over the cited art. The amendments to Claims 1 and 2 do not add new matter. The amendment to Claim 1 is non-limiting with respect to the scope of original Claim 2. Claim 1 is therefore entitled to the full range of equivalents.

Applicants believe that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 06-1447. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit

Account No. 06-1447. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 06-1447.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

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By



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